



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

(406) 758-5200

481374  
Flathead National Forest  
1935 Third Avenue East  
Kalispell, MT 59901

File Code: 2720

Date: August 25, 2000

Flathead Electric Coop., Inc.  
2510 Highway 2 East  
Kalispell, MT 59901

Re: Emergency work during fire closure – Flathead N.F.

The Regional Forester for Region One has implemented Closure Order RF-03-2000 for Northwest Montana Forests effective at 00:01 on August 25, 2000. It has been replaced by Order RF-04-2000, which identifies more specific information. These orders include the Flathead National Forest. Emergency work within closed areas by utility and communication companies and railroads require an entry permit. Enclosed is a copy of an "Entry Permit – Fire Closure Area" to provide emergency access to your permit area on the Flathead National Forest during the closure period. Please note that a copy of the permit must be displayed on the vehicle dashboard of any vehicle parked within a closed area, and anyone working in the area must have a copy in their immediate possession. The permit also requires that your representatives check in and out with the appropriate District Office. Telephone numbers are listed on the permit. Please review the permit for other restrictions and requirements. Also enclosed is a copy of the closure order.

Sincerely,

*Cathy Barbouletos*

CATHY BARBOULETOS  
Forest Supervisor

Cc: District Ranger

Enclosures



**ENTRY PERMIT — FIRE CLOSURE AREA**

(36 CFR 261.50(e)(2), 36 CFR 261.51(e))

**Flathead National Forest**

This permit authorizes the persons or entity listed below to enter National Forest System land closed by Closing Order No. **RF-04-2000**, for the limited purpose described below. The holder must check in and check out with the appropriate Forest Service office or the Incident Command before and after each entry. If immediate check-in/out is not feasible in an emergency, the holder should notify the Forest Service office or Incident Command as soon as possible.

Display this permit on vehicle dashboard when parked within a closed area, and keep a copy of this permit in immediate possession.

Name(s):	<b>Authorized Employees</b>		
Company:	<b>Flathead Electric Coop., Inc.</b>		
Vehicles (license nos. or Co. identification nos.):		Phone:	<b>406-755-4183</b>
Location(s):	<b>Lands within the Flathead National Forest that are necessary to access emergency work.</b>		
Purpose (check one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Private Property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Emergency</b> utility, electronic site, or railroad work <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Emergency</b> access to Permit, Leasehold, Easement areas, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Period:	From:	<b>August 25, 2000</b>	To: <b>November 30, 2000</b>
Forest Service Office:			
For Check-in and Check-out, Contact:	Swan Lake Ranger District	Phone: 406-837-7500	
	Spotted Bear Ranger District	406-758-5376	
	Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger District	406-387-3800	
	Tally Lake Ranger District	406-863-5400	

Approved by:	Authorized Officer: <u>Cathy Bombardieri</u>	Date: <b>August 25, 2000</b>
	Title: <u>Forest Supervisor</u>	

Exercise of the privileges granted by this permit constitutes agreement with and acceptance of all terms and conditions herein. This permit does not absolve the holder of any liability or responsibility for any fire ignited by the holder's operations.

**General Restrictions for all Entries:**

- NO OPEN FLAME on National Forest System lands.
- NO SMOKING (outside of an enclosed vehicle or structure).
- Driving will ONLY be allowed on "cleared roads." These are roads that are 12' wide or wider and cleared of vegetation shoulder to shoulder. Park vehicles only in cleared areas free of grass, weeds, or other combustible material. All other access will be by non-motorized means.
- There will be no access into areas of active fire with the exception of suppression activities (unless authorized by Incident Command).
- Anyone entering a closed area with this permit will have a reliable method of communication.
- Area closures due to fire activity will supercede exemptions in those areas (entry permission must be granted by Incident Command).
- State forest fire rules and regulations for equipment and tools also apply.

See page 2 for Special Restrictions

## **Restrictions – Utility or Electronic Site Work (in addition to General Restrictions):**

### **Activity Restrictions:**

- a. Necessary *emergency* work only. Routine vegetation clearing is not authorized—only trimming of “burners” is authorized.
- b. Repair work and vegetation clearing, trimming, or felling will be done by hand if possible.
- c. Any work requiring use of power equipment must be conducted within 100 feet of adequate suppression equipment and must be accompanied by pumper equipment with a minimum water tank capacity of 200 gallons and a minimum 250 feet of hose.
- d. When power equipment is used, a fire-watch patrol must be conducted for one hour after all operations have ceased.
- e. When a power outage occurs, the affected line segment will be inspected before re-energizing.

### **Vehicle, Work Site, and Personnel Requirements:**

- a. Vehicles must stay on paved or graveled road surfaces if possible. If vehicles must leave paved or graveled surfaces for repair work, then such vehicles must be accompanied by pumper equipment as specified above.
- b. Each worksite must have adequate suppression equipment, which must be within 100 feet of operations at all times.

#### **Equipment required:**

- i. 1 fire extinguisher (dry chemical type, not less than 2ABC rating).
  - ii. 1 5-gallon backpack water container (filled at all times)
  - iii. 1 axe (double bit, 3.5#)
  - iv. 2 shovels (round point #0 lady or equal)
  - v. 2 pulaskis
- c. When local supplies do not provide for the above list, each vehicle must be equipped with at least one fire tool per occupant, and one five-gallon backpack water container or equivalent (a minimum of two two-gallon water containers capable of being sprayed by a hand pump or pressure), and at least one 2ABC fire extinguisher.
  - d. All personnel will have fire retardant clothing (fire shirts and fire pants), hard hats, eight-inch boots, and gloves, or the equivalent.

## **Restrictions – Railroad Work (in addition to General Restrictions):**

### **Activity Restrictions:**

- a. Necessary *emergency* work only. Routine non-essential rail maintenance is not authorized.
- b. Welding, sawing, or grinding operations will include spark shields to surround work and, if possible, be limited to the period between 1:00 AM to 1:00 PM. If such work must be conducted outside this time period, then the rail work supervisor shall notify the appropriate fire dispatch office by phone. The work area shall be wetted down immediately after completion of any such work.
- c. Any work requiring welding or the use of power equipment must be conducted within 100 feet of adequate suppression equipment and must be accompanied by pumper equipment with a minimum water tank capacity of 650 gallons for rail gang work, or 200 gallons per project site, and in each case adequate hose to reach from the water tank to the work site, but not less than 250 feet.
- d. When welding or power equipment is used, a fire-watch patrol with a minimum two-person crew must be conducted for two hours after all operations have ceased.

### **Vehicle, Work Site, and Personnel Requirements:**

- a. Vehicles and equipment must stay on paved or graveled road surfaces or rails if possible. If vehicles must leave paved or graveled surfaces or rails for repair work, then such vehicles must be accompanied by pumper equipment as specified above.
- b. Each worksite must have adequate suppression equipment, which must be within 100 feet of operations at all times.

#### **Equipment required:**

- i. 1 fire extinguisher (dry chemical type, not less than 2ABC rating).
  - ii. 1 5-gallon backpack water container (filled at all times)
  - iii. 1 axe (double bit, 3.5#)
  - iv. 2 shovels (round point #0 lady or equal)
  - v. 2 pulaskis
- c. When local supplies do not provide for the above list, each vehicle must be equipped with at least one fire tool per occupant and one five-gallon backpack water container or equivalent (a minimum of two two-gallon water containers capable of being sprayed by a hand pump or pressure), and at least one 2ABC fire extinguisher.
  - d. All personnel will have fire retardant clothing (fire shirts and fire pants), hard hats, eight-inch boots, and gloves, or the equivalent.

**Regional Forester  
Closure Order  
For  
Northwest Montana Forests**

Pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations 261.50, the following acts are prohibited on National Forest System lands within the following counties of: Flathead, Lincoln, Lake, Missoula and Powell. These restrictions are in addition to those enumerated in Subpart A, Part 261, Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations and become effective August 25, 2000 at 0001 and will remain in effect until rescinded or revoked [36 CFR 261-53(e)]:

**36 CFR 261.52(e) – Going into or being upon an area.**

**Description of Closed Areas:** For the purpose of this order, these are all lands of the Kootenai National Forest and Flathead National Forest under my control.

**Exemptions:** The following are exempt from this closure order and do not require an entry permit:

**General:**

- Private landowners accessing their residence.
- All county, state and federal roads and highways that cross National Forest System lands will remain open unless closed for public safety reasons.
- Any Federal, State, or local official, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
- Livestock and livestock management, however motorized access will be allowed only on existing cleared roads, all other access will be by non-motorized means.
- Administrative use by the agency and/or cooperators for law enforcement activities, research for on going fires, administration of special use and entry permits, and access to military sites by uniformed military personnel.

**Recreational Use:**

1. Campgrounds and Boat Ramps – the following campgrounds and boat ramps are open, but open flame, smoking, barbeques, or propane/gas stoves are prohibited outside of a closed vehicle:

Flathead National Forest: Tally Lake, Swan Lake, Holland Lake and Lindbergh Lake campgrounds and boat ramps; and Big Creek campground and boat ramp.

Kootenai National Forest: McGillivray, Rocky Gorge, Peck Gulch, Rexford Bench, MacGregor Lake, North Dickey Lake, South Dickey Lake, Dorr Skeels, Bad Medicine, Yaak River, Yaak Falls, Whitetail, Pete Creek, Kilbrennan Lake, Bull River, and North Shore campgrounds; Ross Creek Cedars Scenic Area; and Barron Creek Boat Ramp on Lake Koocanusa.

2. River Access – for day use only. Access is allowed from existing developed National Forest access points and includes the following:

Flathead National Forest: the Middle Fork Flathead River: Bear Creek, Essex, Paola, Cascidilla, Mocassin Creek, West Glacier, and House of Mystery; and Glacier Rim on the North Fork Flathead River.

Kootenai National Forest: all Kootenai River access sites.

#### Recreation Residences/Resorts:

1. Federal Recreation Residences – access will be allowed on the Flathead National Forest. Access to and from the buildings must be on existing cleared roads.
2. Rental Cabins – the Condon Work Station Rental Cabin will remain open.
3. Resorts – the following resorts will remain open: Diamond R, Wildemess Ranch, Spotted Bear Guest Lodge, and Holland Lake Lodge.
4. Ski Areas - the following activities will be allowed within the permitted boundaries of the Big Mountain Ski and Summer Resort: operation of the gondola (lift #1) and operation of the Summit House.
5. Work Centers - the Big Creek Work Center being managed by the Glacier Institute will be allowed to be occupied.
6. Marinas – the Koocanusa Marina will remain open.

#### Exempted Roadways:

The following roadways will remain open:

Kootenai National Forest: Yaak #92, Pipe Creek #68 and Wolf Creek #36. FDR #228 will remain open from its junction with Highway 37 to the Barron Creek Boat Ramp.

Flathead National Forest: Road #913 to provide access to the Talley Lake campground; and Road #44 to provide access to the Holland Lake Campground.

Administrative Use and Research:

The following administrative uses are allowed on the Flathead National Forest only:

1. Threatened and endangered species monitoring (only if it must be accomplished this year).
2. Cone collection on National Forest System lands. Motorized access will be allowed only on existing cleared roads, all other access will be by foot or horseback. No motorized tools or firearms may be used
3. Noxious weed treatments may continue on National Forest System lands. Motorized access will be allowed only on existing cleared roads, all other access will be by foot or horseback.

The following research will be allowed:

1. Research and monitoring of aquatic systems (water temperature monitoring in Bull Trout habitat) and grizzly bear research (hair sample collection) that must be done now based on the current condition. Motorized access will be allowed only on existing cleared roads, all other access will be by foot.

All administrative use and research will observe the following:

- Check in and out with the jurisdictional agency.
- Have a reliable method of communication.

All exceptions will observe the following:

- No open flame except in closed vehicles or buildings.
- No smoking except in closed vehicles or buildings.
- Driving will only be allowed on existing cleared roads. These are roads that are 12 feet or wider and cleared of vegetation shoulder to shoulder. All other access will be by non-motorized means.
- There will be no access into areas of active fire with the exception of suppression activities or special permit for emergency work only.

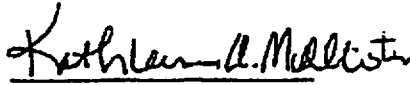
**Other Activities and Special Closures**

All other activities within a closed area require an entry permit. These activities may include, but are not limited to: mining, and emergency work by utility and communication companies and railroads. Area closures due to fire activity will supercede exemptions in those areas.

### Rescissions

This rescinds the prior closure order number RF-03-2000 issued on August 23, 2000.

Done at Missoula, Montana, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2000.

  
✓ DALE N. BOSWORTH  
Regional Forester  
Northern Region  
USDA Forest Service

### Permit Authority

Permit authority for exemptions in hereby delegated to Forest Supervisors.

### Penalty

Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both (16 USC 551 and 18 USC 3559 and 3571).

### Notification

A copy of this order shall be posted as prescribed under 36 CFR 261.51.